

# AMUNDSEN-SCOTT ANTARCTICA BASE NOWHERE NEAR WHERE THEY TELL US IT IS

Source: <http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/190123>

Scott Base

: "Scott Base may also refer to Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station."

**Scott Base** is a base located at **coord|77|51|S|166|45|E** in Antarctica and is operated by New Zealand. It was named after Captain Robert Falcon Scott, Royal Navy, leader of two [British](#) expeditions to the Ross Sea area of Antarctica. Located on Ross Island near Mount Erebus in the Ross Dependency, it is New Zealand's only base in Antarctica. It was set up as support to field research and the centre for research into earth sciences, but now conducts research in many fields.

## Base history

Scott Base was originally constructed in support of the UK inspired and privately managed Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition (TAE). The New Zealand government provided support for the TAE and also for the International Geophysical Year (IGY) project of 1957 five of whose members were attached to the Expedition. Three New Zealand observers with the task of selecting the site for a base went to McMurdo Sound with the United States "Operation Deep Freeze I" in the summer of 1955. After evaluating possible sites, a location near Butter Point was chosen. This was later changed to Pram Point as it provided better access for offloading supplies from the Expedition ship "HMNZS Endeavour" and also allowed for the operation of the critical RNZAF Antarctic Flight on a nearby ice runway. Scott Base passed over to NZ Government ownership via the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), on March 5, 1958, at the conclusion of the TAE. During the IGY the United States facility at Hut Point did not operate as a scientific base. It was the New Zealand expedition's responsibility to furnish the important scientific data (auroral, ionospheric, seismic, etc.), linking the McMurdo area research activities with those of the United States Pole Station and the joint United States-New Zealand station at Cape Hallett, Victoria Land.

In 1958, following completion of the TAE and IGY, New Zealand made the decision to continue to operate Scott Base for scientific research, much of which depends upon the continuity of recorded data over a period of years. In order to maintain operations, a base

rebuilding programme began in 1976. As of 2008, the only original building is the TAE 'A' mess hut, which contains material recording New Zealand's involvement in Antarctica since 1957. In 2005 the two-story high Hillary Field Centre was commissioned, increasing the floor area of Scott Base by 1800 square metres and providing work areas to support field parties as well as additional office space. The building was officially opened by Foreign Minister Phil Goff and Sir Edmund Hillary.

From 1957 until 1986, dogs played a part in base operations. Initially they were an essential means of transport, but with better technology their importance dwindled until they were removed in line with environmental treaties.

### **The base today**

The base is made up of a neat collection of lime-green buildings which are linked by all-weather corridors. These buildings can accommodate 85 people over summer, with a "skeleton staff" of between 10 and 14 people remaining over the winter.

Like nearby McMurdo Station, Scott Base is connected to the global telephone network via a Satellite Earth Station operated by Telecom New Zealand, located approx 3km away at Arrival Heights. Telecom NZ also provide phone and data services to McMurdo as well as to the Italian Programme at Terra Nova Bay. McMurdo Station has an independent communications infrastructure located at Black Island and linked to Ross Island via Microwave.

Scott Base is today operated by Antarctica New Zealand.

### **Climate**

The base has fairly typical weather conditions for Antarctica, with minimum temperatures around -45°C (-49°F) and summer maximums only occasionally above freezing point. It is exposed to the full strength of southerly blizzards, although overall it is less windy than McMurdo Station. The maximum wind velocities experienced have been gusts up to 185 km/h with steady velocities under blizzard conditions of 95–115 km/h. The highest recorded temperature was 6.0°C (42.8°F), the coolest -57°C (-70.6°F) and the mean temperature -19.6°C (-3.3°F).

[<http://www.niwasscience.co.nz/edu/resources/climate/summary/summary.prn>]

### **ee also**

- \*ANDRILL
- \*List of Antarctica expeditions
- \*Marble Point
- \*McMurdo Station
- \*McMurdo Sound
- \*Mt Erebus
- \*Ross Ice Shelf
- \*The Antarctic Sun
- \*Williams Field

